



**Isiah Leggett**  
*County Executive*



**Darren M. Popkin**  
*Sheriff*

**Office of the Sheriff**  
**Domestic Violence Coordinating Council**

**Thursday, September 14, 2017**  
**5:00 PM – 7:00 PM**

**Family Justice Center 5<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room**  
**600 Jefferson Plaza, Suite 500, Rockville, Maryland 20852**

**Meeting Minutes**

**In Attendance:** The Honorable Sidney Katz, Chair (Montgomery County Council); Debbie Feinstein, Vice Chair (Montgomery County Office of the State's Attorney); Teresa Bennett (Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services); Nicole Drew (Montgomery County Commission for Women); The Honorable Karla Smith (Circuit Court for Montgomery County); Resa Levy (Community Member); The Honorable Rebecca Smondrowski (Montgomery County Public School – Board of Education); Cheryl Kravitz (Community Member); Smita Varia, Staff (Office of the Sheriff)

**Guests:** Leslie Orloff (The National Immigrant Women's Advocacy Project); Lisa Mandel-Trupp (Office of Montgomery County Councilmember Sidney Katz); Michael Subin (Criminal Justice Coordinating Commission); Tina Michaels (Montgomery County Department of Correction and Rehabilitation – Pre-trial Services); Sergeant John Reinekka (Montgomery County Department of Police); Laurie Duker and Katie Oidtman (Court Watch Montgomery); Lauren Brown (Yasha Circle Ministry); Shanea Copeland (Member of the Public); Elaine Newton (Member of the Public);

**Absent:** Sheriff Darren Popkin (Montgomery County Office of the Sheriff); Sheila Kamdar (Community Member); Dorothy Fait, Esq. (Community Member); Angela Talley (Montgomery County Department of Correction and Rehabilitation – Pre-trial Services); William Sollod, (Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services – Parole and Probation); Assistant Chief Russell Hamill (Montgomery County Department of Police);

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

- A.** The DVCC is currently accepting applications for open positions. There are currently 3 positions open – 2 for public members that current members have reapplied for, and 1 student position. Rebecca Smondrowski has contacted the Board of Education Student Member to see if he is interested.
- B.** Sidney Katz reminded everyone to take the Open Meetings Act course. Smita Varia will send a reminder email to the members who still need to take it.

## **II. Approval of July Minutes**

The July 13, 2017 DVCC meeting minutes were reviewed. Nicole Drew proposed a motion to approve the minutes without revision. The motion was seconded by Debbie Feinstein and passed.

## **III. Announcements**

### **A. Montgomery County FJC Foundation Update (Resa Levy)**

Resa Levy announced that the FJC Foundation Benefit will be on October 29<sup>th</sup> at the Rockville Hilton.

## **IV. Presentation: The National Immigrant Women's Advocacy Project**

*Guest: Leslye Orloff, Director*

Leslye Orloff from the National Immigrant Women's Advocacy Project (NIWAP) joined the DVCC this month to talk about the services of NIWAP. NIWAP addresses the needs of immigrant women, immigrant children and immigrant victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and other crimes by advocating for reforms in law, policy and practice. Some highlights of the presentation are:

- The earlier people can file for VAWA relief, the better they will be protected.
- In their research, NIWAP found that the abuse rates are much higher when the perpetrator can control the visa of the victim, then when that additional factor of power and control is not available.
- Sexual assault rates for foreign born girls are extremely high.
- Montgomery County is one of the few counties in the country where there are more local public benefits available than the state benefits.

Smita Varia will send the presentation and the handouts via email.

## **V. Reviewing the 2017 Annual Report**

The DVCC Annual Report is due on September 15<sup>th</sup>. Please send Smita Varia any comments or edits you have by September 15<sup>th</sup> at 2 pm.

## **VI. Update on the Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team**

Debbie Feinstein gave an update on the Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team (DVFRT). The Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team was reconstituted in November 2016. Debbie Feinstein is the Chair and Tom Manion is the Vice Chair. The group reviews domestic violence homicide and attempted homicide in Montgomery County cases and try to draw lessons, information, commonalities to help prevent incidences from happening again. The group looks to close any gaps in the system. The Team has reviewed 4 cases and have just introduced a 5<sup>th</sup> case. There is a selection committee that chooses the cases to be reviewed (the cases are only able to be reviewed after the close of prosecution). The team will release a synopsis in Spring 2017 on the types of issues that have risen and the preventive measures that have been discussed.

## **VII. Committee Reports**

### **A. Education and Outreach Committee - Debbie Feinstein, Chair**

Debbie Feinstein reported that Choose Respect will be held on April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at Richard Montgomery High School. Toby Knapp will be emceeding again. Some of

the issues the conference will focus on is looking at bystanders and their role, and including male victims and the LGBTQ community.

The Expect Respect in class presentations are going to be starting in October. The presentations have been updated and letters have been sent to teachers that have requested the presentations in the past

The Coaching Boys Into Men Program is now in 5 schools (4 football teams and 1 weight room). Brian Rubenstein (who is a former college football player) from the State's Attorney's Office spoke at the kick-off event.

The 16 language cards are being printed. Please let Smita Varia know if you would like copies to distribute.

For Domestic Violence Awareness Month, the committee is running a bus campaign with 28 exterior bus signs in English and Spanish and 15 bus shelter signs. The funders for this project are Sidney Katz's Office, the Commission for Women, the Family Justice Center Foundation, and Court Watch Montgomery. The committee is arranging a press event in October.

**B. Victim Services Committee update - Tom Manion, FJC Director**

Four new FJC Victim Assistants started September 5th, they are currently completing a thorough orientation and training program through the end of next week, at which time they will begin conducting outreach calls and taking clients with guidance as necessary. Special thanks to all of the partner agencies who have come to the FJC or invited the new Victim Assistants to tour their facility!

There is still one Victim Assistant vacancy, which the FJC will not be filling until they hear about the status of a VAWA grant application, which should be sometime this month.

Two of the FJC Summer Interns are continuing into the Fall semester, and the FJC hired two additional interns. There are now interns that speak Spanish and Amharic to assist with clients who speak those languages.

Recently Tom Manion and Smita Varia met with Animal Services Division of Montgomery County Police Department to talk about a potential program to temporarily board/foster pets of domestic violence victims who are fleeing their home to a location where they cannot bring their pet. It was a very productive meeting, and they will also be meeting with the Humane Society and possibly some local foster programs. This initiative is in the very early stages, but it is something the FJC is very excited about. The FJC Victim Assistants reported that clients often are hesitant to leave their abuser due to not wanting to leave their pet in the home.

**C. Offender Program and Policy Committee - Angela Talley, Chair**

Tina Michaels reported on the Offender Program and Policy Committee. The committee is going around to different agencies to meet with them. The first meeting was at the Abused Persons Program, with also Corrections and the contractor that

runs the Abuser Intervention Program. A training was just set up with APP and the staff at the Pre-Release Center and Pre-Trial.

Teresa Bennett mentioned that the committee also talked about the Abuser Intervention Program, and that referrals are down. The committee talked about meeting with the Judges to make sure they know the benefits of the program. The committee also discussed how the Judges are allowing offenders to take an online anger management program (for both protective orders and criminal cases). The problem is that no one knows if these programs are evidence based, what the content is, and if the offender is even the one taking the course.

The committee also discussed any possibility of offering the course at Clarksburg Prison. The reason is that those that stay in prison and aren't released in Pre-Trial are not being offered the service – and they may be the more serious offenders.

Future meetings will be with the Commissioners, the Sheriff's Office and the State's Attorney's Office.

**D. Legislative and Policy Planning Committee - Dorothy Fait, Esq., Chair**

There was no update from the committee. Tina Michaels did mention that there is a new bill where victims can request GPS Monitoring on the offender, including notification if they enter the exclusion zone. Tina Michaels did not know who was supposed to monitor this. Debbie Feinstein said that there is a workgroup that is introducing legislation next session on criminalizing violations of pre-trial, and if they violate their conditions pre-trial, it would be a separate criminal offense.

**VIII. Adjournment**

Councilmember Sidney Katz, Chair, adjourned the meeting at 6:45 PM.

**The next DVCC meeting will be on November 9, 2017, 5pm-7pm at the Family Justice Center**



**Domestic Violence Coordinating Council**